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New year, new traditions: Emerson Hillel hosts Rosh Hashanah dinner

Chloe Els
Beacon Staff

On Sunday, around 40 Emerson community members gathered in the Student Performance Center Theater to celebrate Rosh Hashanah.

Rosh Hashanah is the first of the High Holy days on the Jewish calendar. It marks the start of a new year—a period of hopefulness for what is to come, and of reflection on what has been. Observers of the holiday often mark the occasion by eating kosher foods, attending synagogue services, and spending time with loved ones.

In light of the holiday taking place during the academic year—though the holiday falls on different days every year—many in attendance of the first night celebrations sought out community as they celebrated sans family. Emerson's Hillel, an on-campus Jewish organization, set out to provide a space of celebration and connection through its hosting of the festivities.

Jordana Meltzer, a senior performing arts major and secretary of Emerson Hillel, helped organize Sunday night's dinner. As students entered the SPC Theater,

Meltzer said she was happy to see so many people come together.

While she understands the holiday can feel very different without “the comfort of being with family,” Meltzer views Rosh Hashanah as “a time of joy.”

As the dinner commenced, students beamed at each other across round tables and over paper cups of grape juice, drowning out the background music with cheerful conversation.

Though the tables radiated joy, some students had trouble overlooking the lack of family. For Rebecca Sherman, a junior interdisciplinary major, memories of family celebrations flooded her mind despite it being another year celebrating in their absence.

“At home, I would be having a big dinner with family from out of town,” she said. “It's weird not having that, but it's also nice how Emerson makes such an effort to establish a Jewish community here.”

The Hillel dinner brought more than just Emersonians to the table as students from other Boston colleges found themselves taking up seats.

Lilith, a first-year pre-law student who did not disclose her last name, chose to attend Emerson's New Year. Pg. 2

Amigos Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations encourage community

Olivia LeDuc
Beacon Correspondents

Amigos, a student-led cultural organization that aims to foster Latin culture on campus, say that commemorating Hispanic Heritage Month on campus presents an opportunity for students to celebrate and become engaged with Emerson's Latinx communities. The celebration of the histories, cultures, and identities of Hispanic Americans annually runs from Sept. 15 to Oct. 15.

“Hispanic versus Latinx is an important conversation that we know doesn't have a definitive answer,” Elisannett Martinez, advisor of Amigos, said. “We want to create a space for people to feel comfortable having these difficult discussions.”

Martinez, who also serves as the program coordinator of Intercultural Student Affairs, said at length that Hispanic Heritage Month comes down to connecting all students.

“Our goal is to make these events enjoyable for allies and the entire community,” she said.

Amigos is spearheading a wide variety of events to observe the month open to all students. Events administered by Amigos are meant to convey the importance that “all students are welcome and can learn about Hispanic culture,” said Sebastian Ospina, a senior visual media arts major and the



Courtesy Juanma Suárez Teissonniere

secretary of Amigos.

To mark the occasion, Sophia Rodriguez, a senior journalism major and event planner for Amigos, encouraged students to use the month to learn about the identities and voices of Emerson's Hispanic community.

“These events will bring unity in a place that you wouldn't know to be as diverse as it is,” Rodriguez said. “People apart of Amigos are from everywhere around the world and it's a nice community to build upon.”

This year's Hispanic Heritage Month celebrations kicked off on Sept. 21 with Noche de Reggaeton, hosted by Amigos in collaboration with Emerson's Black Organization

with Natural Interest (EBONI).

Other events hosted by Amigos during the month will include a movie night on Sept. 28, and a salsa night with an instructor in the Bill Bordy Theater on Oct. 7. Rodriguez said the organization is also planning trips to the Museum of Science and Six Flags.

Beyond bringing the Emerson community together to honor and celebrate heritage, the month also highlights the college's Hispanic representation at a predominantly white institution. Ospina, a Colombian student, said he initially felt a disconnect from his Hispanic heritage.

“When I came to Emerson, I felt left out because the liveliness of Hispanic culture and community wasn't there,” he said.

Ospina has since found support with other students in Amigos, but recognizes the divide that still stands and impacts other Hispanic students.

“Hispanic students feel left out in a dominant white campus. Most people stay within their own group and don't see how others live their lives,” he said.

Despite the cultural differences that Ospina says can separate ethnic communities, he believes Emerson's efforts in representing Hispanic students are there.

AMIGOS and EBONI Pg. 3

To save Chinatown, we must Experience Chinatown



Courtesy Mel Taing

Ryan Yau and Bryan Liu
Beacon Correspondent

Through the Chinatown gate lies a wrinkle in time against the backdrop of metropolitan Boston. The neighborhood evokes a sense of anachronism: faded, old-fashioned architecture contrasts with the surrounding city, highlighting the Asian American community's historical status as outsiders.

Alum Ashley Yung '19 works as the theater and performance manager for Pao Arts Center, an organization in Chinatown. The Center holds an annual Experience Chinatown Arts Festival, which showcases Asian American visual and performing arts.

Yung joined the Center in 2020 during a turbulent time when morale in Chinatown was at an all time low. COVID hindered com-

munity interaction, and anti-Asian sentiment became a particular challenge for the Asian American population.

Though the logistics were complicated, Yung recognized the need for connection at a time uniquely difficult for the community.

“The act of gathering is really healing, and I didn't really understand that until we couldn't gather anymore,” Yung said in an interview with The Beacon. “So I [was] like, how do we celebrate what we need to celebrate right now, because this community is struggling, we're struggling, and we wanted to try and just brainstorm.”

The Center decided to showcase a series of window murals, each to be done by local Asian American artists. While Yung admits initial enthusiasm for the project was

low, she is thankful for small businesses like local hotpot restaurant Liuyishou that supported the cause from its inception.

“Not many people believed in us, or knew what was going on,” Yung said. “[Liuyishou was the first to] let us, and they've let us every year since. They're great.”

Since then, the Experience Chinatown murals have become a staple of the festival, expanding each year in the scale of artworks and the scope of artists.

In addition to visual arts, the Center champions the power of performance. During lockdown, the organization coordinated dance and exercise classes for senior citizens stuck inside.

“We opened a Zoom room—we'd turn off our camera and

Arts festival, Pg. 6

Alum becomes first female broadcaster in Diamondbacks history

Jordan Pagkalinawan
Beacon Correspondents

Looking over Dodger Stadium from the broadcasting booth on Sept. 20, Jill Gearin '18 made history as the first female broadcaster in Arizona Diamondbacks history.

Gearin stepped to the plate for the D'Backs to call three innings during the team's first game in a doubleheader day, filling in for the team's road broadcaster Chris Garagiola as he took breaks over what would have been an 18-inning day.

“It just made sense for the doubleheader in LA to be the day, because Garagiola was going to have to do 18 innings,” Gearin said. “LA is easy to get to because it's where I'm from. So it just made sense to give me three of those innings.”

Her passion for sports broadcasting began in middle school during a conversation with her mother.

“[I was] complaining about how middle school boys were teasing me for liking sports,” Gearin said, “and she said, ‘You like to talk a lot and you know sports. Why don't you go into sports broadcasting?’ I was 12 years old, and I just took that idea and made it a career.”

Years later she made the comment reality, making not just a dream come true, but becoming a defining moment in baseball history as part of an influx of female talent integrating into the more broadcasting roles.

“My first thought is, ‘I shouldn't be the first,’ It's 2022—there should have been a few more

before me,” she said. “But I'm really honored and honestly proud that I [got] to be the first woman, and I hope there's a lot more coming up behind me.”

On the importance of having more women work in sports, Gearin thinks the public doesn't know how beneficial a female perspective can be.

“In terms of women in all of baseball, you need to have a female perspective,” she said. “We're going to think differently than a man [does], and it's in a positive way. Being able to have people from different backgrounds is so important, because if you have all the same people from the same backgrounds, you're not going to get creative ideas.”

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News

‘She was a visionary, she was a force of nature’: Emerson remembers Maureen Shea

Frankie Rowley
Beacon Staff

Remembered as a “force of nature,” Emerson mourns the loss of Maureen Shea, former co-chair of the performing arts department, who worked at the college for 40 years.

“She had this ability to see a truth in things that is unparalleled, that I don’t know anyone else who could see through everything that was going on and just zero in on the truth in such a just clear fashion,” said Courtney OConnor, associate artistic director at the Lyric Stage Company of Boston and performing arts professor, in an interview with The Beacon.

OConnor worked with Shea in many different roles, meeting her first as a “naive graduate student.” While struggling to figure out what play to focus on for her graduate thesis project, she recalled Shea giving her a book of poems to read, knowing the one she would eventually select would lay within.

According to OConnor, once she finished the book the next day, upon her announcement of selecting a poem, Shea expressed excitement, selecting the exact poem she had picked before she even told her the title. Shocked, OConnor asked her how she knew which she would pick. She replied, “I just knew it. I just knew you,” despite only knowing her for a month.

“She just was incredibly brilliant at reading people and seeing them for who they were in ways they didn’t even see themselves,” she continued. “She did that for me and continued to do that throughout my entire career.”

Of the roles Shea occupied in her life, OConnor emphasized the role Shea played as a mentor, stating that she was the “true definition” of the word.

“Maureen was the true definition of a mentor,” she said. “In my relationship with her, because it was not just about what play I was directing and what problem I was having, it was about my entire life. She was a friend



Maureen Shea / Emerson College

who I could go to with anything.”

Scott Pinkney, head of design and technology and professor of Lighting Design, also regarded Shea as a close friend. Pinkney and Shea worked together for over 30 years, with their first remembered interaction happening in 1992 when he designed Red Noses for Emerson Stage, and she helped Pinkney design the production.

Over the years, the pair grew as friends, eventually discovering their paths had almost crossed once before—at a party ten years prior.

“We were talking, and one thing led to another, and we realized that we’d been at a party on the west side in Manhattan, in like 1982 together before we knew each other,” he remembered.

Shea hired Pinkney when she was co-chair and even taught him while he was working towards a Master’s in Theater Education at Emerson. As a teacher, Pinkney said she was “innovative,” extending the compliment to her directing, as well.

“She was generous with the students,” he said. “When she was directing students here at Emerson, she gave up herself in every way possible.”

As co-chair of the performing arts department, Shea worked alongside Amelia Broome. In an emailed correspondence with The Beacon, Broome described Shea as a “pillar of the

Emerson Community, generous and fierce, awe-inspiring.”

“She was a blessing to have in your corner, willing to go to the mat for what was best for students, colleagues, for our department, and for the school,” Broome said. “She was loved, respected, admired, a little feared but always fair, and she will be sorely missed.”

Shea’s death comes a year after the passing of Bob Colby, former chair of the performing arts department. Pinkney remembered their combined impact on the performing arts department and community as a whole.

“I think we’re all hurting right now, to be honest with you,” he said. “I still haven’t come to grips with Bob’s death, and now, Maureen... I think what we have to do as people who loved them is carry their legacy forward and make sure that their ethics, innovation, and fierce defense of students—I mean, this is from a faculty standpoint—we have to continue that.”

Outside of academia, Shea was an avid lover of Shakespeare with Pinkney, who claimed “[Shea] knows Shakespeare better than any human being.”

“If she knew Shakespeare, after rehearsal, they would go up, drink, and discuss his plays,” Colby joked.

Shea passed away at the age of 71 due to an undisclosed illness on Sept. 20. She leaves behind her partner, Mirta Tocci, brother, Michael Shea, and sister, Kathleen Bergeron.

She also leaves a long-lasting legacy at the college, serving as the sole chair of the performing arts department from 1997 to 2007 and moving on to oversee the theater studies program and Bachelor of Fine Arts program. Shea also worked as the director of special projects for the School of the Arts and as a diligent professor. A celebration of her life will be announced by the college at a later date.

“Her voice has been guiding this department in one way or another for the past 30 years,” said OConnor. “It’s a true loss to Emerson College.”

Students celebrate Jewish new year

Cont. from Pg. 1

son’s event because Suffolk has a “small Jewish chapter.” While it’s hard to be away from her family, Lilith views the Jewish community at Emerson to be a “home away from home” and is glad the school is so accepting of Jewish students.

Around 6:30 p.m., the conversation died down as Hillel chaplain Rachel Sturges, secretary Bailey Allen, and secretary Meltzer stood on stage to lead the Shehechyanu blessing. In English, it translates to “Blessed are You, Adonai, our G-d, Ruler of the universe, who has granted us life, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this occasion.” On a screen behind them, the words to the blessings were projected in both Hebrew and English.

A volunteer from the audience helped light fake candles and recited the blessing in Hebrew over them. Another volunteer led the Kiddush—the blessing for grapes and wine.

The challah blessing, called the Hamotzi, was recited over a traditional round loaf, which represents continuity and progress.

The final blessing was for apples

and honey, traditionally eaten on Rosh Hashanah to symbolize hope for a sweet new year.

After the blessings, students started to eat noodle and potato kugel, matzo ball soup, pomegranate-glazed chicken, and honey cake. Every table had a bowl of apples, and soon apple slices were passed around along with honey and challah.

Between bites of food, students chatted about forgetting to pack synagogue-appropriate clothes for college and how the food at this dinner differed from the food they would have gotten at home.

“Faith traditions can offer a really helpful rhythm to the year,” said Julie Avis Rogers, the director of spiritual and religious life and campus chaplain. “They can make the transition to college smoother by offering something already familiar and meaningful. They’re a constant that can reground you.”

Done with the blessings, Sturges sat down at a table to relax and have dinner. After graduating from the University of Vermont, Sturges was placed at Emerson by the Hillel organization.

It has been nearly 10 years since Sturges celebrated Rosh Hashanah at

home with her family, but she is still aware of how strange it can feel to celebrate without them.

“People are doing their best to be inclusive, but it’s not going to feel like home,” she said.

Sturges views the Jewish community at Emerson as a “smattering of everything” because of its diversity. Already she has been approached by people not involved in the Jewish community who are interested in joining.

While college offers a chance to explore new religions, students also find themselves changing the way they practice their faith.

Many Jewish students at Emerson go to synagogue less than they would at home, she said.

“There aren’t a lot of synagogues in Boston Proper so it’s not super accessible,” Sturges said. “I don’t know if we have the means to hold a weekly service here, but maybe we’ll try this year.”

Emerson Hillel will host Yom Kippur services on Oct. 5th from 10:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m. in the Bill Bordy Theater, followed by a break fast from 6:45 p.m. to 8:15 p.m. in the SPC Theater. All are welcome to attend.

Emerson FSL defies Greek life stereotypes

Karenna Umscheid
Beacon Staff

With “RushTok” taking over the ForYou page of TikTok at the start of every fall, the image of sorority girls dancing in coordinated outfits in front of houses paints the picture of “Greek Life.” However, at Emerson, sororities and fraternities look different.

Katie Hervey, a sophomore visual and media arts major and social chair of Sigma Pi Theta, said how recruitment at Emerson is far different from “RushTok.”

“RushTok is so expensive,” Hervey said. “People buy outfits just for events, and you have to wear name tags and it just gets so big and it’s not personalized either.”

Therese Labordo, a senior VMA major and Kappa Gamma Chi president, said Emerson’s FSL recruitment process is different in comparison to other schools.

“Emerson students are known to be extremely busy,” she said. “We just hold events and let [potential new members] choose where they want to go at their own discretion, so there’s a lot of autonomy in the organizations that they join.”

Labordo said that the common feelings of social pressure and fear of rejection are less prominent in Emerson’s FSL community than in Greek life at other schools.

“The rush process, from what I understand, is that you have to go visit every single sorority, and you put in your preferences, and all the sororities put in their preferences,” Labordo said. “It’s the biggest matchmaking game of all time.”

Each FSL group has a different theme for recruitment. Sigma Pi Theta, a social sorority, is hosting Camp Sigma, with events like a picnic kickoff, s’mores and ghost stories, and speed dating, a higher-intensity event aiming to get more people introduced to each other.

Kappa Gamma Chi, a professional sorority, has chosen “Kappa in the Stars,” with a variety of events and information sessions as well as professionalism workshops and crafts.

“Kappa wants to provide a space for people to grow, and we don’t want to say no to people if they want to grow professionally, socially, whatever you may have it,” Labordo said. “It’s so fun seeing people’s potential and wanting to give them the platform and the space to do that.”

Receiving a bid for Sigma Pi

Theta is still a fun and exciting event, Hervey said, without the stress and pressure it might warrant at a larger school.

“You’re not going to be put into an auditorium with a bunch of new members and have to open a card in front of everybody,” Hervey said. “If you get a bid, my recruitment team and I will come knock on your door and be like, ‘Look, you got a bid, here you go.’ You get a card and take your picture, and decide by the end of the day if you want to accept the bid or not.”

Although FSL operates differently at Emerson, Hervey admitted that common issues surrounding Greek life still exist. However, she credited the college with taking issues within FSL groups seriously.

“The acknowledgement of, and actively working against that stereotype—actively being anti-racist, anti-homophobic—is definitely something that a lot of sororities and fraternities at other schools say they’re doing,” she said. “But they aren’t walking the walk.”

Labordo still acknowledged the problematic history of her sorority.

“Historically, Kappa has been predominantly white, and the sororities and fraternities on campus have been founded with the roots of racism in it,” she said.

She explained that Kappa Gamma Chi is a professional sorority, but the standards of what that professionalism means are based on a white ideal of professionalism.

Greek life at larger colleges is also known for its party culture—a significant reason why so many join. That culture is not the same for Emerson FSL groups, which lack the staple Greek rows lined with fraternity and sorority houses. At Emerson, only 2 percent of men and 3 percent of women are in FSL groups. Alternatively, at the University of Alabama, 36 percent of the undergraduate student body participates in Greek life.

“Here it’s more about finding not built-in best friends, but people who have your back, people who you might not have gotten to talk to [otherwise],” Hervey said.

Labordo said Kappa Gamma Chi is a space for collective growth.

“It’s more focused on networking, having a sense of community, and being in a space with people you see yourself with and that you want to grow with,” she said.

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The sisters of Sigma Pi Theta / Courtesy Katie Hervey

Emerson’s Kasteel Well campus welcomes fall

Ashlyn Wang
Beacon Correspondent

Two main red brick buildings and asphalt-colored roofs, surrounded by moats and lush gardens, greeted approximately 80 students as Kasteel Well welcomed its fall semester residents.

Kasteel Well, a 14th-century medieval castle in Well, Limburg, is Emerson’s campus in the Netherlands. The college offers a three-month study abroad opportunity for students interested in exploring Europe and learning about its history and culture. Students will focus on diversified liberal arts subjects, including intercultural communication, world history, and sociology, among others.

“It’s super calm and quiet,” said Colette Lauture, a sophomore journalism major. “[Arriving] was like going to Hogwarts.”

During her days at the castle, Lauture found herself reflecting on the moment she applied in October 2021, amazed that what had once been an application was now her reality.

She first heard about the castle when she took a tour of Emerson during her junior year of high school. She recalled when the tour guide described how popular the program was, and how students were able to travel across Europe and live in a European-style castle for three months.

“I think this program allows me to see another part of the world that I wouldn’t be able to see every day,” Lauture said, who said she had always dreamed of traveling to Europe. “I’m being exposed to new cultures, new ways of life, and new interactions with different people...It opens your eyes.”

“I knew I wanted to study abroad. I just wasn’t exactly sure when or where,” Carys Hirawady, a sophomore visual and media arts major, said. “Kasteel Well seemed like the best option because we get to travel to so many other places as well, and there’s a lot of opportunities to explore Europe on your own.” She considered the semester in the Netherlands to be an attempt at scheduling her own trips without assistance from adults.

Nicole Townsend, a sophomore journalism major, sees her decision to study at Kasteel Well as an opportunity to explore Europe deeper. Townsend

first visited Europe at 16 and has been eager to return since. She describes Kasteel Well as a fairy tale setting and is passionate about discovering concealed rooms within the castle.

“It totally blew away my expectations...it looks small on the outside, but there are a bunch of little layers that you have to peel back to find the hidden gems,” Townsend said.

The students at the castle will also go on excursions coordinated by the Kasteel Well program to different countries and cities around Europe. On Sept. 23, the castle took a trip to Amsterdam, where the group of students visited museums and went for a city walk.

“It was super informative,” said Lauture. “You’re never really bored in Amsterdam.”

Following his summer trips in Europe, sophomore visual and media arts major Jacob Shafran plans to continue his European exploration whilst studying at the castle. He has already planned a trip to Oktoberfest in Berlin for this week.

Shafran is in Emerson’s honors program, in which the curriculum is slightly more rigid than regular Emerson courses, he said. Kasteel Well is an opportunity for him to enjoy living in a castle and travel across Europe while continuing his time in the honors program.

“They have a sophomore honors seminar [course] at the castle, so I don’t lose any progress from the honors college while I’m here,” Shafran said.

Kasteel Well and its location offer students plentiful resources helping them relax: card games in common rooms, bike riding, hiking, and reading in gardens. Shafran said he took a bus to Venlo, a city near Kasteel Well, where he shopped and walked along a river.

Even though Shafran said he had anticipated the campus would be in a rural area, he was still surprised when he arrived.

“You don’t really know how rural it is until you get there,” he said. “But when you walk outside, it’s flat, green, and there are lots of plants around.”

At the castle, students are exposed to a more lecture-based teaching system with an intensive workload, which, according to Lauture, is a little more “academically challenging” than school at Emerson’s Boston campus. After the first week of class, she felt that balancing her workload and free time was es-



Kasteel Well’s campus in the Netherlands / *Beacon Archives*

pecially important. The library quickly became one of her favorite rooms.

“It’s so cozy, and it just feels like you belong there,” she said.

With a heavier workload, Lauture’s biggest goal is to balance her work and social life, aiming to get to know every student at Kasteel Well.

“Hopefully, by the end of [this semester], we will come out of it as a close unit...as soon as we get back to Boston, we can still hang out.”

“We’re not in a city climate... because in Boston, we’re in the middle of the city,” Townsend said. “We have to be calm and courteous and just adapt to our [new] surroundings.” She discussed the notable difference between Boston’s city campus and Kasteel Well’s countryside campus.

When in Boston, Townsend found herself constantly caught up in school work, but now she tries to take time to relax, travel, and self-reflect.

“I’m always going to study and shoot for good grades, but that’s not my main priority this semester,” Townsend said. “[I’m] enjoying myself because I don’t know when I’m coming back to Europe.”

Hirawady is also enjoying her time abroad like her classmates. Getting ready to push herself out of her comfort zone, she hopes to make new friends during the semester and use the experience to inspire her script, film, or photo series projects.

She was pleased with the castle and her dorm, which she said was much better than she

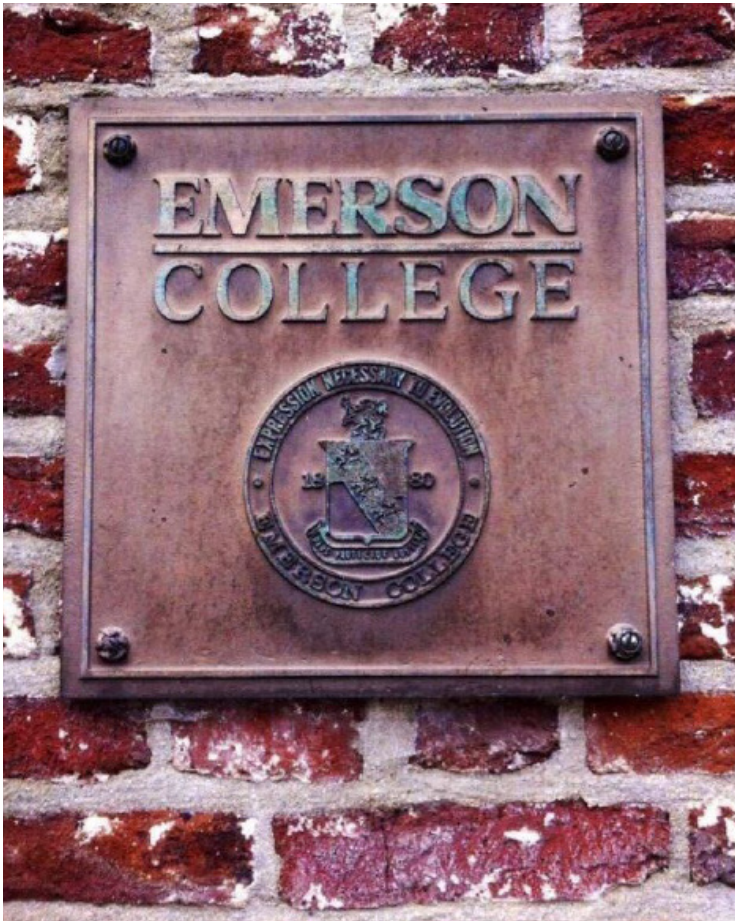
expected. “Everything is just so picturesque. It still feels pretty surreal that we get to just live in this castle for three months,” Hirawady said.

Kasteel Well students who shared their experiences displayed anticipation for this semester’s European experience. They found the program to be an opportunity to explore a school atmosphere and lifestyle differ-

ent from Boston.

“It’s not every day that you get to live in a European castle,” said Lauture. “So I’m trying to soak every day in and just appreciate every day that I’m here.”

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Courtesy Mandi Hinrichs

Amigos and EBONI collaborate to celebrate

Cont. from Pg. 1

Ospina added that the college’s efforts in representation could be improved through marketing more cultural events themselves, rather than entirely relying on student organizations to be hosts.

Rodriguez said she hopes to see Emerson provide more representation and funding to organizations like Amigos.

Not only are the events celebratory for students to share their cultures, but they lead to productive conversations addressing Hispanic complexities, said Martinez.

Martinez said she has been

having consistent discussions with students about identifications with the terms Hispanic or Latinx.

“As we continue to build programming for students ... we are connecting them with terms that grow the community as it converses with itself,” she said.

With the growing visibility of the “shift in language,” Martinez believes Hispanic Heritage Month is an appropriate time to focus on facilitating such conversations.

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Courtesy Roe Medovoi-Klotz

Opinion

Glamorizing murder cases for entertainment is unethical

Christina Horacio
Beacon Correspondent

Infamous serial rapist and killer Jeffrey Dahmer is once again trending after the release of Ryan Murphy’s Netflix series “Monster: the Jeffrey Dahmer Story” on Sept. 21.

A prominent murderer from the late 1970s to early ‘90s, Dahmer has already been the subject of countless movies, television shows, documentaries, and books. Why must we continue to retell the traumatic ways in which his victims died just for the sake of entertainment? Constantly releasing new media glamorizing the Dahmer case subjects the victims’ families to unnecessary cyclical trauma.

Users on social media, specifically Twitter, share the same sentiment. One suggested that the series is adding to Dahmer’s legacy by having “his crimes live on as entertainment.” It is necessary to take “the glamorization and trauma that these kinds of shows are broadcasting” into consideration, another user posted.

The family of Errol Lindsey, a 19-year-old boy who was brutally murdered by Dahmer in 1991, recently spoke out.

“If you’re actually curious about the victims, my family is pissed about this show,” tweeted Eric Perry. “It’s retraumatizing over and over again, and for what? How many movies/shows/documentaries do we need?”

Lindsey was described as “an upstanding and generous individual who loved helping others and making new friends.” Lindsey was also said to be incredibly close to his mother and sister.

A video was posted on Twitter com-



Courtesy Creative Commons

paring footage of Lindsey’s sister, Rita Isbell, screaming at Dahmer in court in 1992 to Murphy’s fictionalized version. Isbell’s cousin, Thulhu, expressed his dismay over the scene.

“Recreating my cousin having an emotional breakdown in court in the face of the man who tortured and murdered her brother is WILD,” wrote Perry.

Because Dahmer’s victims were almost exclusively Black and Brown men, some might argue that the societal factors of racism and homophobia that allowed Dahmer to get away with his crimes for so long need to be exposed. While this is imperative to understand, there is already a surplus of better content and resources detailing these factors in an entirely fact-based way.

If respectful, educational content already exists, why create a show dramatizing and exploiting the case at the affected

families’ expense? Allowing viewers to casually consume and repost scenes that depict real Black and Brown kids getting tortured feels entirely counterintuitive.

“The pain never goes away,” said Stephanie McCay, the second-cousin of victim Jamie Doxtator, when asked by People about the case. “Even now, I can’t really talk about it. It’s so painful.”

Janie Hagen, whose brother Richard Guerrero was also murdered by Dahmer, spoke out, saying, “My mind is like a VCR—it just pauses and it rewinds and it always takes me back to that courtroom.”

Although Murphy is not the only one to blame, it is certainly interesting to know this television series is not the first time he has upset families of murder victims before. His 2016 series, “The People V. O.J. Simpson: American Crime Story,” also upset the families of victims Nicole Brown Simpson and Ron Goldman who were murdered in 1994.

The Goldmans expressed their disapproval of the series in an episode of Dr. Phil.

“We have all the history, we have all the facts, we have all the documentaries,” said Kim Goldman, Ron Goldman’s sister. “Why are we doing this?”

Tanya Simpson, Nicole’s sister, also voiced her dismay, specifically over the fact that no one from production contacted the families “out of respect.”

“They didn’t take the families into consideration,” said Tanya Simpson. “Who is defending my sister?”

Thulhu also commented on Murphy’s lack of contact after his initial tweet gained traction.

“I did not expect that tweet to get this much attention,” tweeted Perry. “To answer the main question, no, they don’t

notify families when they do this. It’s all public record, so they don’t have to notify (or pay!) anyone. My family found out when everyone else did.”

In a separate tweet, he called out Murphy for citing this as a gesture of respect instead of an act of cruelty.

“When they say they’re doing this ‘with respect to the victims’ or ‘honoring the dignity of the victims,’ no one contacts them,” he wrote. “My cousins wake up every few months at this point with a bunch of calls and messages and they know there’s another Dahmer show. It’s cruel.”

The creators and actors of “Monster: the Jeffrey Dahmer Story” have spoken openly about wanting to honor the victims whilst highlighting the systemic failures that delayed Dahmer’s arrest. However, going forward with such a project despite the existing pain it might accentuate within the affected families makes this claim feel entirely disingenuous.

The argument of needing to educate the masses through an entirely fictionalized television show is particularly baseless considering the amount of content that has already been made available surrounding the case. Regardless, if it comes at the cost of harming the families of the victims they want to “honor,” it is utterly immoral and grotesque.

Families shouldn’t have to be subjected to calls and messages from the news asking what they think about the latest exploitative project based on the most traumatic parts of their lives. They shouldn’t have to see videos praising actors and actresses for their ability to embody their family member’s real emotional wreckage—or worse, see scenes showing graphic, vivid depictions of what Dahmer

did to their relatives.

Netflix actually tweeted a scene from the show in which the real 14-year-old victim, Konerak Sinthasomphone, is being brought back into Dahmer’s apartment, naked and unresponsive.

“Can’t stop thinking about this disturbing scene,” states the tweet, which ends with a simple “Now on Netflix.”

The tweet currently has 3.8 million views.

To reduce this real life murder to a must-watch horror scene for millions to gawk at is outrageous. The possibility of Sinthasomphone’s relatives having to see this on social media clearly was either not considered or simply deemed a necessary risk in the hope of increasing streaming numbers. Either way, it is evident that education and respect are not valued above views and revenue.

A review published in Variety also deemed these scenes as unnecessary, dubbing the series as a gorey, disrespectful retelling of the case.

“It simply can’t rise to its own ambition of explaining both the man and the societal inequities his crimes exploited without becoming exploitative in and of itself,” said writer Caroline Framke. “The story of Jeffrey Dahmer has been told [repeatedly]. This version has little else to add.”

Given the show’s exploitative nature and inability to add anything of value to the conversation regarding the case anyway, “Monster: The Jeffrey Dahmer Story” should not be on anyone’s watchlist. It’s time we actually honor the victims of these cases by refusing to reduce their brutal murders to binge-worthy content to enjoy on a Saturday night.

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Stop airing out your beef on missed connections and grow up

Hailey Akau
Beacon Correspondent

Since the beginning of my time at Emerson College, I have come to despise the numerous Instagram accounts known among my peers as “missed connections.” Don’t get me wrong, I love the concept of providing a platform for students to anonymously share their opinions on all things Emerson, but recently I’ve noticed the content on the account taking a sour turn. Missed connections users are quick to jump at any opportunity to share their thoughts and opinions online—specifically in regard to their peers—and often do so without stopping to think about the effect their words may have on those who read them.

The account @ec.missedconnections was recently brought back to my attention by my suitemates, who were discussing recent posts regarding Title IX accusations. Title IX violations aren’t a matter to take lightly, and it is important for students to understand exactly what constitutes a violation of the policy to ensure allegations and claims aren’t misinterpreted by the community.

The post that caught my attention was submitted by someone who claimed to have witnessed a student interacting with another person who had supposedly sexually assaulted multiple women. Comments on the post included the accused person’s first name and last initial as well as their Instagram username. The anonymous submitter said they considered confronting the student during this interaction but was too afraid to speak up at the moment.

Within moments of hearing about this post, I was appalled at the lack of consideration for the accused person’s privacy. While Title IX accusations are nothing



Courtesy Hailey Akau

to take lightly, I wondered how the Emerson student community could allow such heavy allegations to be publicized to a wider audience without any solid evidence to back up or dispute the anonymous poster’s claims.

According to Emerson College policy, students can file Title IX reports based on incidents involving sexual assault and harassment, stalking, and abusive relationships. As of August 2022, the school’s policy against discrimination, harassment, and sexual violence defines Title IX sexual harassment as “(1) unwelcome conduct of a sexual nature; (2) that a reasonable person would find to be so severe, pervasive, and objectionably offensive; (3) that it effectively denies them equal access to the College’s educational program or activity.”

Stalking is defined as “acts in which an individual directly, indirectly, or through third parties, follows, monitors, observes, surveillances, threatens, or communicates to or about a person” and “[causes] a reasonable person to fear for their safety or the safety of others, or to suffer substantial emotional distress.” Title IX

sexual violence is defined as “any sexual act directed against an individual through the use of force, without consent and/or in instances where the Impacted Party is incapable of giving consent.”

The college’s website goes into much further detail regarding specific examples of Title IX violations, but these definitions are just three of the main violations most students are aware of.

Students airing their grievances on the missed connections account are too quick to jump to conclusions surrounding Title IX accusations and blast their opinions on the topic without understanding what actions constitute a violation of this policy. We throw around the term “Title IX” and discuss other people’s business without

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actually considering how effective the discussion is or how the involved parties may feel about the situation.

Don’t get me wrong, I strongly believe it is extremely important for survivors to have a space where they can be heard and carry out an open, effective conversation about how to move forward and heal from traumatic experiences. However, using an anonymous platform to air out other people’s business without fully understanding the story is simply immature and inappropriate.

Since the fall of my freshman year, it has been apparent that students do not think before submitting posts complaining about their roommates or peers. From sharing information about people’s personal hygiene to complaining about throwing dorm room parties, Emerson students are brutal when their names aren’t attached to what they post.

As a child growing up in the age of the Internet, I understand the impulsive tendency we have to hit the post button after drafting out our ideas on Instagram, Snapchat, TikTok, and other social media platforms. However, in recent years, I have come to realize the importance of thinking before you post to ensure the claims you are making do not offend or misrepresent other people and social groups.

I’m not trying to say we should ban accounts like “missed connections,” but

we should really think about how the words we post will affect the issues we say we are trying to resolve. Interpersonal conflicts can be frustrating and sometimes we need to just let out our feelings to someone who is willing to listen, but there’s a difference between healthy venting and publicizing personal information about people without their approval or consent.

Turning to anonymous posting platforms instead of facing conflict head-on is extremely childish behavior. During my time at Emerson, I have heard many stories about students simply not being capable of handling any sort of confrontation between friends or roommates. It’s disappointing that we are still perpetuating this type of behavior even as young adults. It makes me think that a majority of the Emerson student body is not ready to face the real world, where you can’t run to a resident assistant the moment you dislike something about someone else.

Interpersonal conflicts are inevitable and out of our control. However, dealing with these issues like an adult and confronting them in a mature manner is truly the only way to resolve them and move forward. It’s time for us to stop airing out our beef on anonymous public platforms and behave like the adults we are supposed to be.

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Paramore is for the Blacks. Argue with the wall

Hadera McKay
Beacon Staff

On Sept. 28, punk rock band Paramore released its new single “This is Why,” after a five-year hiatus, ultimately signaling its reigning return with a quirky, upbeat and instant classic. Social media was immediately flooded with memes and commentary from Black Paramore fans praising the return of the Grammy award-winning band.

One user tweeted—over a picture of the recent single cover—“Finally some BLACK music!” Others chimed in, thanking the band for delivering more “gospel anthems” and comparing the single’s release to Beyoncé’s recently released album, saying, “First Beyoncé, now Paramore. We up this year!”

In 2005, a collection of teens making music after school in Franklin, T.N., became Paramore, a Christian rock band. Paramore’s roots in gospel music are definite draws for Black American communities who operate with lasting remnants of the value of Christianity and negro spirituals in promoting community and hope during times of enslavement. Paramore’s lyrics mirror these themes of hope, from 2009’s “The Only Exception” to 2017’s “Hard Times.” The climbing musical cadence of classics like “Misery Business” and “Brick by Boring Brick” is adjacent to organ-led spiritual breakdowns during a church service. There’s a literal gospel choir at the end of “Ain’t it Fun,” arguably the Black Paramore fan anthem.

The band has been upfront about not only the Christian influences on their music but the inherently Black artistic influences as well. In an interview with okayplayer, Williams cited influences like Erykah Badu, Janet Jackson, Outkast, and Solange on her own solo music, but also as a point of reference in writing with Paramore band members.

Williams honored the distinct significance some of these artists have for the Black community from a place of education and appreciation, saying, “It would appear to me as—I’m a white woman speaking on this, so forgive my ignorance—that [Erykah Badu’s] been hugely, hugely influential on Black culture and people’s recognition



Courtesy Creative Commons

of their roots. Again, it’s one of those things when I listen to her, I’m like, ‘Oh, I know that I don’t get this, but I’ll still appreciate it.’”

As a Black woman and an avid fan of Paramore since the iPod touch days, I felt so seen by the community of social media users celebrating the return of a shared love: the intense emotion, glorious sound, and evergreen lyrics of Taylor York, Zac Farro, and lead vocalist Hayley Williams—the current members of Paramore. More than anything, I found myself wondering where this community was when I was alone in my bedroom, blasting “crushcrushcrush” in my headphones and praying my mom didn’t beat my ass for jumping up and down upstairs.

In my adolescence, I was ashamed of my connection with Paramore’s supposedly “white” music. Now, as Black Paramore fans reveal their own emotional experiences with the band, I am filled with gratitude and closeness to my community that no uninformed white person can take away. Black people love Paramore; it is an indisputable fact.

Though whites have done everything in their power to erase the influence of Black people on rock music, Black Paramore fans have found a way to foster a genuine relationship with rock that promotes catharsis, community, and soul. But why did it take so long for this truth to come to light, and how can Black people have a connection to something that society

has spent so long defining as inherently white?

Since 2018, social media has been permeated with discourse from Black social media users, declaring not only their abiding love for Paramore but also the loneliness they experienced as a result of their passion for the emo rock band. Some users described being called “Oreos” for liking what their peers considered to be “white music.”

Black people who have lived most of their lives in predominantly white spaces are familiar with this term, which implies some cultural inauthenticity or disloyal nature to the Black community and an internal subservience or pandering to white people. To reference popular YouTube video essayist Madisyn Brown’s video titled “why do Black people love Paramore,” how can rock music be white when Black people created it?

Like most genres of music, dances, fashion styles, slang, and damn near everything else, Rock and Roll was a foundationally Black cultural staple appropriated by whites. Before there was Elvis Presley, there was Sister Rosetta Tharpe with her strong, captivating vocals and her revolutionary use of the electric guitar. Before Johnny Cash and Bruce Springsteen, there was the stage presence and lyricism of Little Richard and Chuck Berry. And before Rock and Roll became synonymous with sweaty white people with stringy hair breaking guitars on stage,

it was characterized by the back rooms of Southern Black clubs and churches.

Rock and Roll began with a seamless combination of rhythm-led negro spirituals, inspired use of the drums, standup bass, and electric guitar, and the soaring and lamenting lyrics and voice of the Blues. White teens in the 1950s and ‘60s connected with the rhythmic, self-expressive, and rebellious nature of Blues and early Rock and Roll, opening the door for a genre initially labeled as “race music” to be accessible and shaped for white audiences.

Whites were so successful at wiping Black people from the narrative of Rock and Roll that we, in turn, perpetuated our own form of racial delineation in music, ultimately ostracizing members of our own communities for liking what we came to define, at the behest of white people, as “white” music.

A prime example of this is three-time Grammy winner and late ‘60s psychedelic rock legend Jimi Hendrix who Jack Hamilton describes in his article, “How Rock and Roll became white,” as an artist “judged by many as a fraud or sellout, his blackness rendering his music as inauthentically rock at the same time that his music rendered his person as inauthentically Black.”

Some of us were also rock artists, playing in garage bands with our friends, or emo loners, or just eighth graders blasting Fall Out Boy and Paramore in our headphones and praying no one on the bus would ask us what we were listening to for fear of immediate ridicule.

The truth is, Rock and Roll and its various branches—from punk to screamo to indie rock—is at its core a genre seeped in the importance of authenticity, a cathartic reflection of the pain of oppression, emotional turmoil, and hopelessness, and the almost-reverent experience of communing with people who understand those elements intimately. If we use that definition, rock music is not “white” music; in fact, it might be the most quintessentially Black thing there is.

These themes of community and the ingrained influence of soul and Blues are the very things that have contributed to the genuine relationship Paramore fostered with the bleeding

hearts of Black people.

So much of Paramore’s deep appreciation for Black music comes out in the music, particularly in Williams’ vocal performance and stage presence. Williams exhibits a vocal range and control that firmly plants her as one of the standout vocalists of the last 20 years. Her strong belting and vocal riffs are parrots of Black soul and R&B artists. She is even able to maintain these strengths while delivering high-energy performances and encouraging audience participation, creating an unforgettable live music experience. Countless videos have gone viral of concert moments where Williams belts ending notes, adds controlled runs to a verse, or explodes in a fit of fun dancing that’s not just on beat but actually good.

Paramore’s themes, musicality, and performances all point to the band’s true, untainted relationship with its Black audience. From 2007’s “Riot!” to 2013’s self-titled album and the many iterations of the band with shifting members and styles, Paramore has found a way to both maintain and diversify its fanbase. No matter what changes the band faces, I can always expect to connect with their honest and raw emotional lyrics, creative drum patterns, all-encompassing melody, and gut-wrenching vocals. Paramore has consistently demonstrated its dedication to pure, unadulterated raging, and that, more than anything, is a point of connection and healing among their Black listeners.

In a time when BIPOC people are tired of asking for representation in diverse, authentic, non-stereotypical roles in all forms of media, I am excited and grateful that Black people are reclaiming spaces that have long been perpetuated as exclusively white. I honor the many activists, Black rock artists, and creatives that have paved the way for me to love what I love unapologetically, even if white people can’t catch up enough to see it. In the meantime, I’ll be bumping “This is Why” on repeat, waiting for Paramore’s release of their next album in February (Black History Month. Coincidence? I think not.), and biding my time until the upcoming tour.

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Sex is an asset in or out of a relationship

Mariyam Quaisar
Beacon Staff

Sex comes in a variety of forms—we all know that—but we can all agree that there’s a difference between making love to a significant other versus doing the deed with a rando. Either path to shag is valid; whether someone chooses to lead a hookup-based love life versus choosing to foster a relationship is their prerogative.

Besides professional development, one of the biggest challenges as a college student is maintaining what society deems a healthy sex life. The idea of having sex with one person your whole life for means of reproduction is not applicable to our generation. Sex is, finally, sexy. It’s fun and exciting and... climactic. So, why limit ourselves?

A plethora of dating applications are cultivating our generation’s hook-up culture and making casual sex more accessible than ever. But let’s make one thing clear: these apps are not the reason for hookup culture; they simply create an easier outlet for people to unleash their sex beast. More importantly, finding fulfillment in such a lifestyle should not be belittled or looked down upon because it’s natural. It is natural to crave sex, just like it’s natural to crave a Jefe’s burrito—

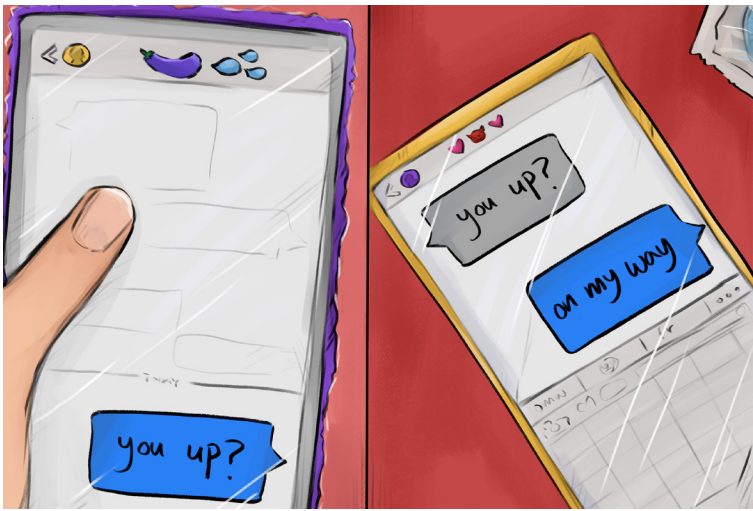
both of which you should allow your body to have.

Our libidos dictate a significant portion of our lives. Scientifically, men hit the peak of their horniness when they’re 18 years old. College guys are horny, and they want sex on-the-go. On the other hand, college girls are scientifically not known to be “as fired up” because a woman’s height of horniness hits from ages 26-32. But this doesn’t mean that a lot of college girls don’t have sexual needs to address.

The intensity at which our libidos influence our bodies varies person to person. The way your sex drive functions dictates how sexually active you want to be, and there is nothing wrong with that. Often, a high sex drive coupled with a lack of desire for commitment creates a hookup lifestyle. In my eyes, you’re simply taking care of yourself by being a hookup enthusiast.

A hookup lifestyle, however, is very different from engaging in a few quickies here and there. Following a lifestyle often means you bang for the buck, not for a potential romance. (If you’re looking for a romance, your outlook on hookups will be drastically different because you’re looking for the other situation mentioned above: choosing to nurture a relationship with your special person).

Many college students prefer this



Courtesy Rachel Choi

second route, referred to by many as commitment. Communication, growth, quality time, giggling, and staring into another’s eyes. I’ve heard many people debate the pros and cons of being in a relationship in college because it supposedly hinders you from “living your best life.” The idea of commitment quickly transforms into the fear of missing out—not being able to spend time with friends as much, not being able to flirt as much (you know who you are), or losing time to work on yourself. At the end of the day, these excuses are just that: excuses.

Speaking from personal experience,

being in a relationship in college can be as redeeming as going on a date with a new person every week. While one path fosters a bond with someone you feel a connection with, the other gives you a chance to explore your likes and dislikes in regards to your love life. Most importantly, both routes harbor plenty of sex, if that’s what you’re looking for... which we all know you are.

While I am an advocate for both lifestyles, I will always preach that communication is key. Being in a relationship with someone where you feel comfortable to communicate and share your feelings

with is vital for a healthy sex life. Often, people are scared to have a constructive discussion about their sexual preferences in fear of hurting their partner’s feelings—I am no stranger to this. Now, I can talk to my partner about whatever is on my mind without fear of opposition, judgment, or ridicule. I definitely couldn’t say the same a year ago.

Hookup culture has swiftly turned toxic because of the lack of proper communication that comes with one night stands. Great sex is great when you openly tell your partner what you like; fantastic sex is fantastic when your partner automatically knows. Obviously, this bank of knowledge will grow over time as a sexual relationship prospers, but regardless of whether your sexcapade is a one time or long term thing, you should be having open conversations about what makes you feel good. Otherwise, what’s the point?

Having sex as a college student can be tricky and unnerving, but it comes down to one major point: follow your heart. If you’re more into hitting and quitting, do that. If you’re looking for your special person, good luck friend. Either way, I wish you amazing, fulfilling sex.

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Living Arts

‘Always, Lola’: small-scale production makes a

Izzy Mitchell
Beacon Correspondent

A ragtag group of undergraduates struggle to come to terms with the death of a friend in a coming-of-age dramedy that will have you laughing, crying, and smiling through the tears.

Jeffrey Crane Graham’s film “Always, Lola” made its big screen debut on the east coast on Sept. 24 at the Boston Film Festival. The story follows five friends on their annual camping trip after their friend Lola’s sudden death. Together, they navigate the aftermath of this tragedy as they move through the various stages of grief, and try their best to come to terms with reality.



Courtesy Jeffrey Crane Graham

The Regal Fenway Theater was sold out, filled with Graham and the cast’s friends and family members. The theater’s neon lights radiated a warm glow over the crowd, as they chanted “Lola! Lola!” with popcorn and a soft drink in hand, awaiting the appearance of Roxy Striar who played Lola in her first starring role.

Before accepting the role of Lola, Striar was an entertainment host for 2010’s newly launched AfterBuzz TV, where she met Graham and producer Keven Undergaro. In 2018, the three came together for a table read of “Always, Lola.” Undergaro fell in love with its “poignancy,” which jumpstarted the film’s production.

“I’ve never done [a film] like this that has meaning and such impact, and purpose,” Undergaro said in an interview with The Beacon. “The fact that the script really tapped into [mental health] and raised an awareness made it so it was something I had to be part of.”

Graham reveals the story behind the script, driven to write about the death of his best friend from high-school. With depression and substance abuse currently at an all time high, “Always, Lola” contributes to the discussion surrounding mental health and seeking help.

“We’re in the middle of a pandemic right now but I think it’s

becoming very clear that the next health crisis will be a mental health crisis,” Graham said.

The film has already won two awards at the Marina rep Ray and Silicon Beach Film Festivals for best feature and director. The film team is still in the middle of its distribution journey, but Graham’s goal is to have it available on streaming platforms next year.

While Graham has written other scripts in the past, this is the first feature he wrote with the intention of actually producing it. While writing, however, Graham had to keep in mind the constraints of financing the film.

“One of the smartest things that you can do as a filmmaker early in your career is just shoot within your means,” Graham said. “Focus on characters and story, and personal emotional experiences, because everyone can connect with that even if there’s not a big car chase, or a big war scene, or a rocket going into space.”

In what he referred to as a “bootstrap” production, Graham and his team shot the film in only 11 days.

“Even on the largest productions, you are going to war when you go to

a film set,” he said. “You are fighting time; time is the enemy. Everything is so expensive and you have a schedule and you’re trying to create art within the constraints of business.”

With a small cast and modest budget, Graham serves as an inspiration to students and those interested in making their own work. While filming “Always, Lola” at his alma mater—Miami University of Ohio—Graham hired current students for various roles such as assistant director, script supervisor, digital imaging technician, and background actors.

“I almost wish I would have done it younger,” he said. “Start making stuff now. That’s how you learn.”

Undergaro, who has years of experience in the entertainment business, encourages students to take the leap.

“Just do it,” he said. “Your first film doesn’t dictate your career. Now you can make a movie on your phone, the key is being resourceful and creative.”

The small town location of Oxford, OH worked as a blessing in disguise for cast and crew, who were able to cut through red tape and permits when finding areas to film. The

set fostered an intimate atmosphere that radiates from the screen, as they were able to bond over their personal relationships with the characters, grief, and death.

“Everyone has experienced losing someone they love,” Graham said. “With that being the emotional context of the film and the thematic DNA of the story, we knew it would make a rich context for storytelling.”

In an interview with The Beacon, Striar elaborated on the cast’s bond with the film and each other.

“There was not an odd man out,” she said. “Everyone was there for the same purpose and everyone connected equally.”

The “purpose” Striar referred to connects the audience to the film. Both those involved and those watching are there for Lola, and for the tens of millions of people struggling with the illness she represents.

“The thing about growing up is that it’s very hard to get out unscathed,” Striar said. “There’s so many people out there with these beautiful, or horrifying, or devastating, or exhilarating stories that deserve to be told.”

Right now, “Always, Lola” is more relevant than ever. Warm, in-

timate, and funny, it leaves audience members with a greater understanding and empathy for those suffering with mental health. The bright colors, use of social media, colloquial language, and pop-culture references allow the film to communicate its message with the youth.

The five undergraduates honored Lola as they cheered to her memory with red solo cups. The campfire cast a glow on their faces as they sat together, surrounded by darkness. Through intimate conversations, each character moved through the five stages of grief as well as the pain that comes with reopening the past.

The film explored the simultaneity of mourning and moving on. By suddenly switching from present to past tense over the course of the story, the echoing voices that played in the flashbacks acted as echoes in the mind. Quiet rested on the campsite, crickets filling the silence between the things left unsaid.

In these moments, do you push people away or do you pull them closer? What happens in the “after?” The friends find themselves drawn together as they figure out who they are without Lola, and how to stay intact without the glue that held them together.

Through a scavenger hunt set by Lola just before her death, characters are forced to reflect as they find pieces of herself left behind, and take comfort in the parts of her that they carry with them. The moments of comedy remind audiences it’s okay to look back and smile.

“Grief is meant to be shared and discussed and collectively experienced,” Graham said. “One of the most dangerous ways to grieve is to do it alone.”

In a conversation after the screening, Graham said he hopes the film will destigmatize conversations about mental health and seeking help.

“Lola’s death could save some-

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Arts festival rekindles Asian American community

Cont. from Pg. 1

leave a laptop on the side, and let them run this class, because it’s really good for them,” she said. “The times I’ve heard these classes start, they’re so happy and excited. This was a need in the community.”

The Center is currently holding its fifth Experience Chinatown, running from Aug. 26 to Oct. 28. Traditionally, there have been open applications for artists, but this year Yung chose the performers herself. The roster includes indie musician Maddie Lam,

violinist Shaw Pong Liu, and Maple Leaf Senior Dancers. Yung said connecting with artists is her favorite part of the job.

“Sometimes I get [so] lost in the logistics of making the event happen that I forget about how cool the content is and how cool the people who are involved with creating this art [are],” she said.

In addition to uplifting the community, Yung inspires those around her. Sophia Chen, who works as communications and development manager for the Center, praises Yung’s



An Experience Chinatown mural at Liuyishou. / Courtesy Mel Taing



Ashley Yung at an Experience Chinatown performance / Courtesy Lee-Daniel Tran

dedication to the organization.

“She’s very passionate about Pao Arts, as you can probably tell, especially being someone who grew up in Chinatown,” Chen said. “I love Ashley so much.”

Unfortunately, due to ongoing gentrification, Chinatown is being encroached on as real estate businesses threaten borders, and local ma and pa stores are driven out by a commercialized wave of invasive boba shops. These unwanted additions are challenging the gated community’s cultural and territorial sanctity.

Yung’s work with the Center helps preserve the culture of a neighborhood that has grown immensely precious to her. Their ultimate mission is

to serve its residents.

“I grew up watching art galleries take over Chinatown, and then bars and all these expensive restaurants take over,” Chen said. “That’s something that we work really hard to not do as an art center, to provide a place where people can exercise creative agency that does not lead to the demolition of their homes.”

The Center’s focus on murals and performances connect people from within the neighborhood but also bring outsiders in. Yung wants Chinatown to be seen for its rich cultural fabric.

“Every year we’re losing another bakery, every year we’re losing another business that’s been here for ten

years, and that’s a little upsetting,” Yung said. “There’s this core that I feel like needs to be preserved, the foods and the smells and the structure of Chinatown.”

Nonetheless, Yung believes the Center’s efforts will hold the community together.

“The borders of Chinatown [are] shrinking as we speak, [but] Pao Arts Center being where we are, in the corner of the neighborhood—it’s like you can’t take it anymore, you can’t take it from this corner. We have this anchor and it won’t shrink from our end.”

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Big Night Live has suffered a terrible attack, as singer Yola blew the roof clean off

Shannon Garrido
Beacon Staff

English singer-songwriter and musician Yola Carter made a stop at Big Night Live in Boston on Sept. 21 to perform her latest album “Stand For Myself” on a US tour.

As I power-walked through the venue to quickly find a spot right in front of the stage, I noticed the crowd around me was... particular. There was no shortage of craft beer millennials, parents (with their children), and maybe even someone’s grandma making their way toward the dance floor. It was clear Yola’s music didn’t attract a singular demographic—her music can be enjoyed by anyone.

When Yola walked out with a big smile on her face, the violet lights complimented her sleek black dress and purple curls. She started with “Barely Alive,” the first song in her latest album “Stand For Myself.”

Her voice was smooth and gracious, every syllable pronounced and emphasized with such a sultry power it sent shivers down my spine—and this was only the first song. Like so much of her music, “Barely Alive” is lyrically tragic and existential, but sunny and uplifting in its delivery.

The song describes the sad and, in many cases, traumatic experiences Black women endure. “Barely Alive,” written shortly after George Floyd’s murder two years ago, details the isolating feelings that come with being the only Black woman in a room.

“Alone for all these years/ Isolated we hold in our tears/ And we try to get by/ And we strive/ But we’re barely alive,” Yola sang to the crowd, almost humming the last word for every line.

She put so much pain and sorrow into her lyrics to the point that all I wanted to do was stand still and take in the lyrics as she sang. “When will we start living? Could you even try?”

But the second you hear the live-



Yola singing at her “Stand for Myself” tour. / Courtesy Marissa Ariyoshi

ly strike of the keyboard and her voice against the drums, there’s nothing else you can do but dance along with her. I wasn’t the only one moving to the rhythm while simultaneously wiping away tears. The group of women to my right were swaying and bawling in unison with their hands in the air. The effect Yola had on the room right out the gate made me excited for the rest of her performance. And, boy, she did not disappoint.

Every record from her newest album was an experience in itself. When she performed “Now You’re Here,” a romantic and passionate track, it felt like her voice embraced the room, encouraging ev-

eryone to join her. Amongst many wonderful moments, the crowd seemed to come more alive as Yola danced, laughed, and joked around while she sang. Although every note and belt was flawless, she seemed to be enjoying herself just as much as the audience. It almost seemed as if no hard work went into singing her heart out the way she was.

There were several moments where she explained her songwriting process before performing it, always making sure to sprinkle in her natural comedic flare. My personal favorite was when she started to describe how the song “Diamond Studded Shoes” came to her.

As a native of Bristol, England, Yola described her distaste for Theresa Mary, a British politician who served as Prime Minister and Leader of the Conservative Party from 2016 to 2019.

She recounted a story where she was watching the news and the former prime minister announced service cutbacks due to a lack of finances. Money, she said, could be used to feed starving children. Money, she assured, came from the common worker and not from a political party. She made this announcement whilst wearing diamonds on the heels of her shoes. Yola said Mary’s shortcomings inspired her to write the song, which once again is uplifting and full of good energy at a first listen, but holds a much deeper meaning upon further interpretation.

“Everybody’s saying/ That it’s gonna be alright/ But I can’t help but wonder/ If it’s gonna be on my dime,” Yola sang.

The lyrics explored Yola’s major concern with the state of the world around her. She very beautifully detailed how these socioeconomic disparities and the condescending rhetoric politicians shove down our throats has become tiring. It was very surreal to listen to the song after I understood what it meant and thought to myself, “is it really going to be alright?”

However, the intent of the song is not to keep us feeling helpless.

“I wanted it to feel like a bunch of people who were just marching down the street very victoriously, and felt like a successful demonstration in its energy—a good energy, a high energy, upbeat like we’re really unified and really believing in what we’re doing,” Yola said of Diamond Studded Shoes in an interview with Rolling Stone.

Hearing the song in-person ignited just that. It felt empowering and unifying to know everyone there was on the same page and was confident enough to sing out

these concerns with her.

Yola then sang with her “Living Room Band”—a group of backup musicians who helped recreate the sound of her original demos, which were written and recorded in her living room before being remastered in a studio.— She sang “Whatever You Want,” a song about leaving a controlling relationship and gaining the confidence and the power to reject the partner that hurt her. It was at this moment that my voice started to crack by how much I screamed the lyrics with her.

The Living Room band also sang “If I Had To Do It All Again” in its original form and at this moment I lost my voice and my sanity. It’s one of my favorite songs on the album “Stand For Myself” and hearing it in such a raw form—only guitars and bass to complement Yola’s (insane) voice—was unlike anything I have ever experienced.

As the concert wound down, Yola’s voice began to reach earth-shattering volumes. Her belts were heavenly to the point where I would stop moving and just stare in shock. My mind could not comprehend how someone’s voice could do something so majestic, but then again I have had a sore throat since 2004. Her rendition of her melodic and powerful record “Great Divide” sent me into heart failure, as she sang about yearning for human connection her voice quite literally thundered through the venue. It was impressive and beautiful and everything in between.

Once she took her final bow and the lights came back up, my voice was completely gone, my legs felt like jelly, and my friends and I just stared at each other for a good minute. The walk home was catastrophic but completely worth it.

Yola is an outstanding performer, an incredibly passionate and gifted songwriter with a voice that is out of this world. I cannot recommend the experience more. If she is

Junior BCE’s music management and promotion company in the Boston hip-hop scene

Karenna Umscheid
Beacon Staff

Two students have jump-started their careers in the music industry, managing emerging artists, planning concerts, and promoting events within the Boston hip-hop scene.

Juniors Harry Jenkins and Nissim Herskovits, both studying business of creative enterprises, met during their first-year orientation, bonding over their love for rap music. Their friendship grew from there, eventually turning into a professional partnership.

“I said [a similar favorite artist] to Harry, and he messaged me and was like, ‘What’s your phone number? Let’s talk,’” Herskovits said. “We just hit it off from there and decided to start this together because we were both interested in music.”

Inspired by a Future and Juice WRLD song, together the two created Afterlife. Since the birth of their company, they’ve managed artists such as RichAmiri and DevStacks, and promoted five concerts in the past eight months. Afterlife is focused on developing careers for their musicians by organization and throwing concerts throughout the Greater Boston area.

“Our real goal is seeing our art-

ists succeed,” Herskovits said.

Typically, artists have both a manager and a booking agent, but Afterlife combines those roles to make an artist’s career growth process more efficient.

“What we’re trying to do is be an all-in-one manager for the artist and provide them with all the resources they would need for multiple people,” said Jenkins.

Since starting the company in November 2021, Afterlife has hosted multiple events and manages local artists such as RichAmiri and DevStacks, both of whom they met at shows in Boston. RichAmiri currently has a record deal, and a recent DevStacks single now has two million streams.

“Getting Amir signed to a record deal is something that I’m proud of,” Herskovits said. “Being able to navigate that process as we were sophomores in college, being able to go into that situation walking out feeling like we didn’t get taken advantage of, and [now] he’s in a great place.”

Jenkins and Herskovits credit their success partially to the lack of hip-hop artists and related events in the Boston area.

“On social media and in the articles written, it’s really talking about the new age of hip hop in Boston and our artists are at the forefront of that,” said Jenkins.

“Our concerts are the only concerts really highlighting the small hip-hop artists, and really just shining a light on what’s going on.”

Jenkins and Herskovits credit their ability to relate to their artists due to their youth and the technological savvy required of music management for emerging rap artists.

“A big asset for us is that we are really young, because the Soundcloud scene they’re a part of is really young,” Herskovits said.

This ties into their goal to manage not as individuals but as a brand, and to connect with the Boston community as a whole.

“We’ve built Afterlife into a brand,” Jenkins said. “We’re not just managers. All other managers and other people in music do it as a person, but we’re trying to do it under the brand of Afterlife and bring it holistically around the community of Boston and our artists.”

Now, Herskovits and Jenkins are focused on continuing the work they’re doing, hoping to develop and improve their current work.

“We are looking to become fully dependent on ourselves, just running concerts and managing artists and making sure we can develop the careers of artists to the next level, throwing bigger shows



RichAmiri (left), Harry Jenkins (middle), and Nissim Herskovits (right) after a concert / Courtesy Nissim Herskovits

and eventually developing more aspects of the company,” Jenkins said.

For the future of Afterlife, Herskovits and Jenkins hope to convert their current brand into an independent record label, so they can sign some of the artists they are currently managing. They’re currently in the process of fund-

raising.

[We hope to have] real money to invest in the artists ourselves while still allowing them to maintain ownership of their music,” Herskovits said.

Sports

Gearin reflects on time at Emerson

Cont. from Pg. 1

Gearin currently works as the director of broadcasting and media relations manager for the Visalia Rawhide, the Diamondbacks' minor league affiliate.

During her time at Emerson, she was a first-baseman on the softball team and was involved with WEBN-TV and Emerson Channel Sports.

As a student-athlete, Gearin and the Lions made the NEWMAC playoffs for the first time in the program's history in her senior year, which was one of her fondest memories.

"That was just four years of hard work paying off where we changed the culture of the team and put softball first," Gearin said. "Proving that sports can be a priority for you and you can go on to have a great career."

She also mentioned hosting 7News Reporter and fellow Emerson alum Rob Way's capstone as another highlight of her Emerson experience.

"That was an honor for me because I think so highly of Rob," she said. "Having him believe in me for this massive capstone that is really important for us in Marsha [Della-Giustina]'s class, that was

another good memory that I have."

On the broadcast side, Gearin was an associate producer for ECS and a writer for WEBN. She said her first sideline report for ECS was "terrible," but she received praise from baseball players' parents after color-commentating a game during her sophomore year.

"That was the first time that I kind of was able to swallow my pride and say, 'Okay, this is something I can do. I'm starting to prove it,'" she said.

Gearin said she would not be where she is today without Emerson, particularly with the alumni network and the connections it offers. A key internship for her was with the Boston Red Sox in 2018, organized exclusively for Emerson students by Tim Neverett '88, which sent her into the professional spotlight.

Afterward, she called some games with the Nashua Silver Knights, a summer collegiate team from New Hampshire, before putting together a reel and applying to the Visalia Rawhide, which is the Diamondbacks' minor league affiliate and her current employer.

Her first encounter with the Rawhide was with another Emerson alum—Julian

Rifkind, '15—who was the Rawhide's Director of Baseball Operations at the time.

"He was a senior on the baseball team when I was a freshman on the softball team," she said. After asking Rifkind for an opportunity, he pointed her to the general manager, "who also [happened] to be a woman. She really wanted to give other women in this industry an opportunity. It was definitely the 'Emerson Mafia' coming through and 'right place, right time.'" Gearin added.

In November 2018, Gearin worked at a fall league broadcast. She asked the Vice President of broadcasting, Scott Geyer, to use a booth for a "mock-cast," where reporters use an empty booth in MLB stadiums to practice their craft. Geyer obliged, but he also wanted her to get on the radio for the real deal.

In her current position, Gearin is able to interact with players and their families, broadcasting over many of the first professional innings of their careers.

Gearin was not the only Lion roaring in the broadcast booth that day as she was accompanied by Neverett and Steve Berthiaume '87.

"It's just nice to always have that sup-



Courtesy Jill Gearin. Photos by Emma Sharon of MLB

port system," she said. "To come off air and be able to go talk to Tim, and before air, for Steve to come give me advice. It was just really nice to have that emotional support."

To Gearin, being an Emersonian means being part of a community.

"I think at Emerson, there's all these different little communities within," she said. "[If] you find someone on the street who went to Emerson, you get really excited. My mom has an Emerson license plate holder, and someone pulled over, put their window down, and said, 'Oh my gosh, I went to Emerson!' There's definitely this crazy community amongst us."

Gearing encouraged anyone interested in sports journalism to follow their dreams.

"Like I said, my first sideline reporting job was terrible, and my first time doing play-by-play, I wasn't that good at it," she said. "If you wait until you think you're good enough, you're never going to be good enough, and you're going to miss an opportunity. So take all of the opportunities you can and continue to try to improve."

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Celtics Head Coach Ime Udoka suspended for 2022-23 season

Aidan Crooke
Beacon Correspondent

On Sept. 22, the Boston Celtics issued a press release stating a simple message that changed the expectations for the upcoming season:

"The Boston Celtics announced today that the team has suspended Head Coach Ime Udoka for the 2022-23 season for violations of team policies," the press release stated. "A decision about his future with the Celtics will be made at a later date. The suspension takes effect immediately."

According to ESPN's Senior NBA Insider Adrian Wojnarowski, the suspension was a result of a "consensual relationship with a female staff member." As a result, Assistant Coach Joe Mazzulla received a promotion to interim head coach.

Udoka joined the Celtics at the beginning of the 2021 season and coached a team that finished just two games from winning it all. But just when things were looking up for the C's, a tsunami washed away the confidence of many Celtics fans.

As the internet does best, many rumors conspired across social media that have not only tainted the validity of the narratives, but also gone on to antagonize multiple women on Celtics' staff, blaming and scrutinizing each for Udoka's faults.

"I think nobody can control Twitter speculation and rampant bullshit," Celtics' President of Basketball Operations Brad Stevens said in a press conference on Sep. 24. "I think we, as an organiza-

tion, have a responsibility to make sure we're there to support [the staffers] now because a lot of people were unfairly dragged into that."

Wyc Grousbeck, governor and majority owner of the Celtics, stated the suspension was "warranted and appropriate, backed by substantial research, evidence, and facts," as well as stating that Udoka was "accepting" of the suspension as a whole.

In an appearance on First Take, Wojnarowski stated Grousbeck and Stevens "did not provide a lot of clarity" on their thought process for the suspension rather than immediate dismissal. Udoka released a statement immediately after the Celtics announced his suspension, stating he was "sorry for putting [the Celtics] in this difficult situation, and [he accepts] the team's decision."

Udoka, of course, has also received his end of the media backlash, being called "selfish" by many. He has been in a relationship with actress Nia Long for 10 years, and the two have been engaged since 2015. His infidelity has perplexed the internet but also frustrated many.

As the Celtics went into damage control and the higher-ups discussed their options, Celtics Media Day arrived on the 26th—Udoka's cheating scandal being the hot topic.

Questions about the situation were asked and short answers were given, but many players mentioned being left in the dark.

"It's been hell for us," said Marcus Smart, Celtics guard and reigning NBA defensive player of the year. "Nobody really knows anything so we're just in the wind like everybody else, so these last couple of days have been confusing."

Several players expressed shock and confusion throughout the press conference, indicating a frustration with the lack of concern for players on behalf of Celtics management.

As the Celtics approach training camp and preseason, the reigning Eastern Conference champions must be ready to adapt and overcome this scandal that's practically changed their team. Training camp begins on Sept. 28, with the Celtics beginning their new season on Oct. 18 against the Philadelphia 76ers at TD Garden.

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Emerson XC pops off at Pop Crowell

Jason Tulchin
Beacon Staff

It was a day of top placements and broken personal records at the Pop Crowell Invitational this past Saturday at Gordon College for the Emerson men's and women's cross country teams, both of whom placed sixth in the competition.

The men combined an overall time of 2:30.28 with an average 8K of 30:05, while the women's team pulled together with an overall 6K time of 2:23.06, averaging 28:43 for each runner. Senior captain Oliver Glass shattered his previous 8K record of 27:56 with a lightning-quick 27:40.07.



Women's Cross Country / Courtesy of Emerson XC

"It was one of the best races I've run in my college career," Glass said. "It was a good feeling following that race."

Coming in second-fastest on the men's team was junior Sam Cahill, who ran a 29:49.06. First-year John Lanza ranked among the Lions' top men's runners, with an impressive first-ever 8K time of 29:58.03. Sophomore Joe Norris finished a mere second behind with a time of 29:59.02.

Emerson cross country Head Coach Brandon Fox saw Lanza and fellow first-year runner Niko Wahl's first time running the five miles as a solid start to the season.

"It was a great first step for us," Fox

said. "Especially when that adjustment can take a little bit of time, not necessarily [just] from a strength and conditioning aspect, but also a mental aspect."

The women's team had a top performance from the prodigious sophomore Sam Zannotti, who ran a 24:20.08 and placed fifth in the 6K race. Not far behind was first-year Olivia Kardos, who placed in 10th and ran 24:56.01, which was also a personal record for her.

These top-10 finishes were the first of the season for Zannotti—who is also a utility player on the women's softball team—is just now starting to run for Emerson after suffering an injury last season.

a runner, especially outdoors, always has an impact on how you play [...] it was definitely in our favor."

The Lions' next meet will be at the Runnin' Monks Invitational at Saint Joseph's College on Oct. 8. Glass said the team will spend the three weeks preparing for the hilly terrain of the Monks' course in Standish, ME.

"We're definitely doing a lot of hills," Glass said. "So that's one big thing, [as well as] keeping our mileage high early in the season."

The long break between meets, according to Glass, is an opportunity to put work early to allot the runners time for recovery before the championship meets—a strategy that Fox put into

"[Zannotti] does everything you could ask for and more," Fox said. "We're doing thresholds, seeing how fast we can get her to go. We have a benchmark for 25 minutes for the 6K, which is the women's [NEWMAC] championship distance."

Senior captain Paige Thimmesch also commended their teammates' performances.

"It shocked me," Thimmesch said, "but it didn't surprise me."

Weather and terrain also made for the perfect mix to ensure the Lions' success.

"It was beautiful, sunny, and around 65 degrees out," Thimmesch said. "As

plan. "We're going to be doing a lot of fine-tuning to increase the intensity of our interval workouts," Fox said.

Between first-years and sophomores recovering from injuries, Fox plans on testing the threshold of the new athletes and seeing where their comfort zones lie. If the Pop Crowell Invitational was an indication, the young Lions and Lionesses hold plenty of promise.

"There's a lot of positivity, and we're enjoying it so far [...] I'm excited for this particular group."

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Scoreboard	
Men's Soccer	
Sept. 24	
Emerson 1	Babson 3
Women's Soccer	
Sept. 24	
Emerson 4	WPI 0
Sept. 27	
Emerson 1	Cstlton 0
Women's Tennis	
Sept. 27	
Emerson 8	Curry 1
Men's Tennis	
Sept. 23	
Emerson 2	Estrn Nazarene 7